



Cooperative Connections

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Power On

October is National Co-op Month



Rodney Haag

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As an electric cooperative, our top priority is always to provide reliable, affordable energy to you, the consumer-members we serve. Because we are a co-op, our mission is to enrich the lives of our members and serve the long-term interests of our local community – and this mission has never been more critical than in recent months. One of the seven principles that guides all co-ops is “concern for community.” To me, this principle is the essential DNA of Oahe Electric Cooperative, and it sets us apart from other electric utilities.

October is National Co-op Month, and electric cooperatives across the country are highlighting the many ways we “Power On.” Keeping this theme in mind, I recognize the essential role we play in serving special communities like ours.

Who would have fathomed in March, that the COVID-19 virus would amount to a test of our community and our nation? The changing circumstances due to the pandemic have created both challenges and opportunities. Over the past several months, we have all been challenged to operate differently, and Oahe Electric has stepped up to help our members and strengthen the safety net for our more vulnerable neighbors.

As an essential service, and to ensure reliability of your power supply, we modified our operations to safeguard business continuity. Our line crews began working from home in two three-man crews to maintain separation. We either canceled or have remote meetings to allow for safe separation. We also closed our office doors to ensure the health and safety of our employees and our valued members. We will be having a drive-through annual meeting Oct. 3, 2020, in Onida. And since March 2020, Oahe Electric’s board meetings have been held via WebEx, our first face-to-face meeting was held in August. For the health and safety of everyone, we think these measures were the prudent course of action for the times.

I tell you about all these efforts not to boast about Oahe Electric but to explain how much we care about this community – because we live here too.

We have seen other local businesses rising to meet similar challenges during this time, because that is what communities do. While the challenges caused by COVID-19 have been daunting, I am heartened to see how everyone is pulling together.

In 1946, Oahe Electric Co-op was formed by the community to serve the community, and that is what we’ll continue to do – Power On.

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Oahe Electric Cooperative Connections

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Our Mission

Oahe Electric delivers high quality, low-cost electric service to our local member-owners. As a Touchstone Energy® Cooperative, we are committed to meeting the highest standards of customer satisfaction. We do business with accountability, integrity, innovation and commitment to community. As an electric co-op, we are part of America's most trusted network of high quality energy providers.

Co-op Connections' Card			
OAHE ELECTRIC		Cooperative Connections Card Program Vendors	
Automotive			
Graham Tire Company	605-224-8643	Pierre	Receive a 10% discount on regularly priced service work. Cannot be combined with any other offer.
Lamb Motor Company	800-952-2222	Onida	Receive a free alignment check with the purchase of 4 new tires.
Napa Auto and Truck Parts/Farnam's Genuine Parts, Inc.	605-224-8624	Pierre	Receive 10-50% off retail price.
Food/Convenience Store			
Branding Iron Bistro	605-494-3333	Pierre	Enjoy \$1 off your order. Limit one per visit.
Gator's Pizza Pasta and Subs	605-224-6262	Pierre	Purchase any large pizza at regular price and receive a FREE order of breadsticks.
Grey Goose Store	605-945-0794	Pierre	Receive a free 20 oz. fountain soda or coffee with the minimum of a \$30 gas or diesel purchase.
The Corner	605-258-2400	Onida	Buy one breakfast sandwich at regular price, get second half off.
Health/Fitness and Beauty			
Anytime Fitness	605-224-4011	Pierre	Receive a free two-week mini-membership.
Home/Garden			
The Pink Petal	605-224-1775	Pierre	10% discount on cash and carry purchases - fresh floral only.
Slumberland Furniture	605-945-1997	Pierre	20% off any regular priced Lazy Boy items. Excluding special orders.
Services			
Airtech Heating and Cooling	605-945-0160	Pierre	\$50 discount on any new heat pump OR \$15 discount on any service call.
Apryl's Animal House	605-224-9203	Pierre	10% off a grooming or boarding.
Inman's Water Technologies	605-224-5111	Pierre	Receive a 15% discount on the rental price of a water softener and/or reverse osmosis drinking water system by paying a year in advance. Receive 10% off of the purchase price of a new Water Softener or reverse osmosis drinking water system when you mention this ad. Payments made by credit cards do not qualify for discounts/specials.
Olson Plumbing Inc.	605-224-6436	Pierre	\$50 discount on any electric boiler, Marathon water heater, or fireplace.
Small Engine House	605-224-5815	Pierre	10% off parts and labor.
Sports/Recreation			
Teton River Traders Gun Shop LLC	605-224-1371	Ft. Pierre	2% discount. Payments made by credit cards do not qualify for discount.
Retail			
Fastenal	605-224-4060	Pierre	10% off of fasteners and 5% off on all other products.

Use Safety as Your Guide When Planting Trees

If the trees in your yard have grown so tall that they touch overhead power lines, they can cause all kinds of trouble. Branches that sway in the wind and rain can snap an electric line, sending a live wire to the ground, where it can electrocute anyone who touches it.

Plus, power lines that are broken by fallen trees will cause you and your neighbors to lose electricity and require a costly trip from your electric cooperative.

That's why any tree that poses a danger—even an old or favorite tree—could be slated for removal by your electric cooperative.

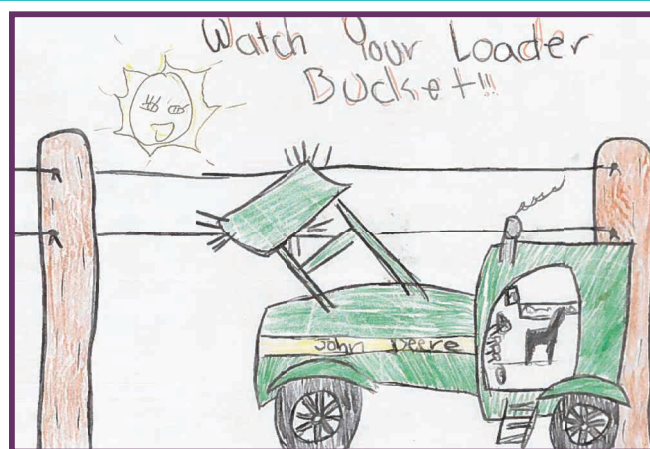
You can prevent problems on the front end by planting smart.

Here are a few tips:

- Do some research and learn all you can about the particular type of tree you want to plant. Learn how tall it will grow when it matures and how wide the full span of its mature branches will become. Use those dimensions to determine how far away from an existing power line you should plant it. Some trees are safe only when they grow 30 feet or more away from a line.
- If the landscape design you like requires you to plant trees in close proximity to electric lines, choose a low-growing variety that will never be tall enough to pose a hazard.
- Before digging any holes to plant trees, call 811, the state's "call before you dig" service. If you don't call and hit underground utility lines, you could be liable for damages.
- Avoid planting in the right-of-way on the edge of your yard or personal property. Your local electric cooperative and other utility companies must maintain that space and could wind up trimming trees out of the way of power lines, possibly leaving the tree looking lopsided.
- Don't plant shrubs too close to your home's outdoor air conditioning unit. AC units require breathing room and should never be crowded by shrubbery or debris.
- If your yard is already home to trees that are close to power lines, keep the trees trimmed so they don't touch any overhead wires. Hire a professional tree trimmer with the proper tools and training to provide this service for you. Don't risk doing it yourself.



KIDS CORNER SAFETY POSTER



"Watch Your Loader Bucket!"

Adalin Homola, 11 years old

Adalin Homola is the daughter of Joe and Sonja Homola from Lake Nordin. They are members of H-D Electric Cooperative based in Clear Lake.

Kids, send your drawing with an electrical safety tip to your local electric cooperative (address found on Page 3). If your poster is published, you'll receive a prize. All entries must include your name, age, mailing address and the names of your parents. Colored drawings are encouraged.

People-Pleasing Pasta

Pasta Florentine

16 oz. penne pasta	1 zucchini, cut in thin strips
1 red pepper, thin cut	2 cans mushrooms, drained
1 onion, chopped	1/8 cup butter
1 cup tomatoes, chopped	1/4 cup flour
1 cup skim milk	1 cup chicken broth
1/2 tsp. nutmeg	1/2 tsp. pepper
1 pkg. frozen spinach, thawed, drained	1/4 cup Parmesan

Prepare pasta, cooking 7 minutes. Drain. Spoon into greased 9x13 baking dish. Cook and stir zucchini, peppers, mushrooms, and onions for 3-4 minutes. Remove from heat, stir in tomatoes. Spoon mixture over pasta and gently mix. Whisk flour with drippings in skillet. Whisk in milk. Add broth, nutmeg and pepper. Cook over medium heat and stir until mixture comes to boil and thickens. Add spinach and cheese. Pour sauce over casserole. Cover with foil. Bake at 350 degrees for 40-45 minutes.

Glen and Linda Erickson, Chester, SD

One Pan Chicken Alfredo

3 tablespoons olive oil	1/2 lb. penne pasta, or any bite-sized shape pasta, uncooked
1/4 lb. boneless, skinless chicken breasts	2 c. freshly shredded real parmesan cheese
2 cloves garlic, minced	Salt and pepper
2 c. low sodium chicken broth	Flat leaf parsley for garnish
1 c. heavy cream or half and half	

Cut chicken breasts into half-inch and 1-inch pieces. Season with salt/pepper. Brown chicken in olive oil over medium heat. It will finish cooking as it simmers. Add minced garlic and saute for 1 minute. Add broth, cream or half and half and uncooked pasta and stir. Bring to a boil, cover, reduce to a simmer. Keep pan covered while simmering. Simmer for 15-20 minutes or until pasta is tender. Remove from heat, stir in shredded parmesan cheese. Season with salt and pepper.

Judy Mendel, Doland, SD

Pizza Hot Dish

2 lb. hamburger - brown, sprinkle with onion and garlic salt	1/2 cup water
1 10-oz. can pizza sauce	1/2 tsp. salt
1 8-oz. can tomato sauce	1/4 tsp. pepper
	1 tsp. oregano

Simmer above ingredients 20 minutes. Add 1-1/2 cup grated American cheese (Velveeta) and 8-oz. package of wide noodles, cooked. Put 1/2 of sauce in 9x13 cake pan. Top with noodles. Add rest of sauce. Top with mozzarella cheese and sprinkle generously with parmesan cheese. Bake 30-40 minutes at 350 degrees.

Shirley Miller, Winfred, SD

Shrimp Scampi

8 ounces pasta linguine	1/4 teaspoon black pepper
2 tablespoons butter	1 dash crushed red pepper flakes
2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil	1-1/2 pounds large or extra-large Aqua Star shrimp, shelled
4 garlic cloves, minced	1/3 cup parsley, chopped
1/2 cup dry white wine or seafood broth	1/2 lemon, juice only
3/4 teaspoon kosher salt	

Cook pasta according to package directions. In large skillet, melt butter and oil. Add garlic and saute until fragrant. Add wine or broth, salt, red pepper flakes and black pepper. Bring to simmer and reduce by half. Add shrimp and saute until shrimp turn pink and opaque, approximately 2-4 minutes depending on size. Stir in parsley, lemon juice and cooked pasta. Provided by www.aquastar.com.

Please send your favorite vegetarian, garden produce and pasta recipes to your local electric cooperative (address found on Page 3). Each recipe printed will be entered into a drawing for a prize in December 2020. All entries must include your name, mailing address, telephone number and cooperative name.

2020 Director Candidate Profiles

Ken Gillaspie

1. What do you do for a living?

I am currently retired. I do volunteer work at the Moose Lodge in Ft. Pierre and help others in need of assistance.

2. Tell us about your family:

I grew up in a large family in Midland, S.D. I live alone. I am close to my siblings and nieces and nephews. I attend church in Pierre. I like our family get-togethers and the fun we have.

3. What inspired you to want to serve on the Oahe Electric Cooperative Board? I was inspired to serve on the board as I saw what a good company it was. I grew up on a rural electric system and always was interested in learning more about the operations.

4. Give us three adjectives that “sum you up:” kind, caring, compassionate



Ken Gillaspie

Ryan Noyes

1. What do you do for a living?

I am the elementary principal at Buchanan School in Pierre.

2. Tell us about your family:

My wife, Ann, is a 5th grade teacher at Kennedy Elementary School in Pierre. We have two girls: Maria and Ellie. Maria is in her first year at Black Hills State University. Ellie is a sophomore at Riggs High School in Pierre. Ann and I are starting our 23rd year in education.

3. What inspired you to want to serve on the Oahe Electric Cooperative Board? One of the pillars of Oahe Electric’s Cooperative Principles is Concern for Community. It is here where the board focuses on member needs and sustainable development. Being interested in the process and wanting to be involved, has sparked my interest in serving on Oahe Electric Cooperative’s Board. If selected, I would use this opportunity to be a voice for the members and work cooperatively with the other board members to develop policies that grow the mission of Oahe Electric and move it progressively into the future.

4. Give us three adjectives that “sum you up:” good listener, hardworking, trustworthy



Ryan Noyes

Kirk Yackley

1. What do you do for a living?

I farm with my son, Tom, and my brother, Greg. Jackie (wife) works at a local bank as an internal auditor. We have the privilege of farming the land that my grandparents and parents farmed. It is halfway between Onida and Harrold.

2. Tell us about your family:

Jackie and I have been married for 40 years. We have four older children who are on their own and two boys, ages 11 and 13, who keep us on the run.

3. What inspired you to want to serve on the Oahe Electric Cooperative Board? Member/Owner representation from the different areas of the Oahe Electric Co-op, to provide a necessary utility to our rural members.

4. Give us three adjectives that “sum you up:” hardworking, honest, respectful



Kirk Yackley

OAHE ELECTRIC

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

OFFICIAL ELECTION BALLOT

Ballot for Director Election to fill two, three-year director terms.

Oahe Electric Cooperative, Inc.
69th Annual Meeting
October 3, 2020
Onida, South Dakota

Select **no more than two** names below.

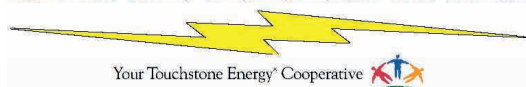
Ken Gillaspie
 Ryan Noyes
 Kirk Yackley

OFFICIAL 2019 ANNUAL MEETING MINUTES APPROVAL

Ballot to approve/approve with changes the 2019 Annual Meeting minutes, found on the back cover of the enclosed annual meeting program.

Approve as written
 Approve with the following changes: _____

OAHE ELECTRIC



69th Annual Meeting ~ 4 p.m.- 6 p.m. ~ Saturday, Oct. 3, 2020
Onida, S.D. ~ Sully Buttes High School
DRIVE-THRU ANNUAL MEETING

Due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, we do not feel it is socially responsible for us to hold our traditional style annual meeting, not to mention there is a lack of facilities available for large public gatherings. This year, all you have to do is drive-thru on the designated route, cast a vote for the director candidate(s) of your choice and you will receive a \$40 bill credit on your next bill – it's that easy! **Employees and directors will be available to guide you through the process.**

Director candidate speeches will be posted on our website (www.oaheelectric.com) and our Facebook page two weeks prior to the meeting. They will also be broadcast on an FM radio station at the meeting.

 Registration

 Cast Ballot/Exit

 Radio Transmitter



LOOK FOR YOUR REGISTRATION CARD IN THE MAIL!! WE HOPE TO SEE YOU AT YOUR 69TH ANNUAL MEETING!

ANNUAL MEETING NOTICE

Oahe Electric Cooperative's annual meeting is accessible to the handicapped. If special assistance is needed, please contact Oahe Electric Cooperative, Inc., P.O. Box 216, Blunt, SD 57522 or call 1-800-640-6243.

Winner of Question of the Month

The Question of the Month winners for the August 2020 publication were James and Rebecca Schmidt. They correctly answered the question, "According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics Consumer Price Index (CPI), how much did the cost of electricity increase from 2014-2019?" The answer was 0.4 percent!

Congratulations for providing the correct answer! They received a insulated grocery tote full of great prizes!

Question of the Month!

This month's question is:

Do you plan on attending your 69th annual meeting?

Please submit your answer via e-mail to oahe@oaheelectric.com with the subject line reading: Question of the Month.

A winner will be chosen and a surprise gift will be sent to them.

Like Us!

You can now keep in touch with your cooperative on Facebook!



We will share with you the latest news, events, power outage updates, energy efficiency tips, money-saving rebates, load management information, legislative alerts, safety tips and much more!

We hope you "like" Oahe Electric Cooperative, Inc. on Facebook.

OPEN FOR BUSINESS



While the ag markets have experienced shifts and changes, rural South Dakota continues to offer a favorable business climate for many industry sectors.

S.D. IS OPEN FOR BUSINESS

REED Fund supports business growth in rural areas

Billy Gibson

editor@sdrea.coop

The old adage about making hay while the sun is shining is not lost on the Governor's Office of Economic Development.

During the summer months, the department launched an aggressive regional advertising campaign called "South Dakota Means Business," aimed at encouraging companies from surrounding states to relocate to a more business-friendly environment.

The timing of this marketing strategy was intended to take advantage of the favorable national publicity the state has received for its response to COVID-19 and also to lure disaffected businesses weary of increasingly onerous and burdensome regulatory policies in other states.

The promotional initiative was based on a long list of advantages that make it easier in South Dakota for companies to maximize positive margins and plan for future growth.

The campaign featured Gov. Kristi Noem emphasizing the fact that South Dakota has been ranked best in the nation in several categories: lowest business costs; most accessible financing; two-year college graduation rates; lowest regulatory restrictions; lowest state tax revenue volatility; and more.

"We hear over and over from business owners in other states that increased government regulations are making it difficult to earn a profit and plan for growth," said Commissioner Steve Westra. "We want to get the word out that it doesn't have to be this way."

"As out-of-state businesses become more frustrated with

Dakota Style is a thriving business that has received REED funding through Codington-Clark Electric.



overreach by their state governments, they're turning to South Dakota," said Gov. Noem. "The number of new businesses interested in moving to South Dakota has increased dramatically. We're ready to show these businesses what South Dakota can do for them."

While Gov. Noem pushes to attract more businesses to South Dakota, the state's rural electric cooperatives continue to be engaged in efforts to spark community development. Twenty of the state's electric cooperatives collaborate with five western-Minnesota co-ops to support local business growth through the Rural Electric Economic Development, Inc. (REED) Fund. The non-profit corporation provides financing in all or parts of roughly 70 counties in the two states.

The REED Fund was created in 1997 to boost business growth in small communities and has issued nearly 400 loans totaling more

than \$102 million. That financial support has resulted in more than 9,000 jobs.

While the fund is used by rural electric cooperatives to boost economic activity in their service areas, it is not restricted to co-ops. Many loans have gone to retail entities, manufacturing facilities, agriculture processing and marketing and support services. The fund has also been used to support rural health care, education, recreation, arts, public safety, community infrastructure, housing and office space.

The fund is supported by state and federal government entities, including the Governor's Office of Economic Development and the USDA Rural Economic Development Loan and Grant Program, and also private groups such as Dakota Resources, Basin Electric Cooperative and banking institutions.

The REED Fund had a record year in 2019, with \$12.8 million in new loans. REED and Avera Health also signed a new workforce housing development financing partnership as Avera committed to a \$2 million investment in the fund. This investment, along with an additional \$1 million pledge from SDN Communications and another \$1 million from First Bank & Trust, will expand efforts to finance workforce housing.

Two loans issued in August went to Lesterville Fire and Rescue from Bon Homme Yankton Electric, and to 605 Sires, LLC, from Southeastern Electric.

Bon Homme Electric Manager Stephanie Horst said the money would go toward the purchase of new air packs and a new building addition for the local volunteer fire department.

"A big part of our guiding principles as locally-owned, locally-controlled electric cooperatives is to do whatever we can to improve the quality of life in our service areas and to expand the range of economic opportunities available to our members and our communities," Horst said. "It's very gratifying for us to know we're making a positive impact."

She noted that more than 80 percent of the REED Fund's lending is established in communities of fewer than 4,000 people and 98 percent of REED-financed projects have local ownership.

At Southeastern Electric, General Manager Brad Schardin said 605 Sires, LLC, used its financing to expand its family-owned, full-service bull collection and donor facility. The company opened in 2017 and delivers its products to customers both domestically and internationally.

According to Schardin, "Delivering electrical power that is safe, affordable, reliable and accessible is a tall order in itself. But our commitment goes beyond providing electricity. We also have an obligation to enhance and improve the communities we serve. The REED Fund is an excellent resource to help us fulfill that commitment."

For more information on the REED Fund, visit www.reedfund.coop or call 605-256-8015.

Future of Energy Storage

Energy storage technology is extremely versatile - it's small enough to fit in your phone, or large enough to power your entire home.

Many people are familiar with small-scale batteries for handheld devices, but utility-scale batteries take energy storage to a whole new level. The ability to store energy helps to ensure that energy demand meets supply at any given time, making electricity available when you need it.

The most widespread form of energy storage in the U.S. is through pumped hydropower, a form of mechanical energy storage. Pumped hydropower has been used for several decades now, and currently makes up about 97 percent of the country's utility storage capacity.

Energy is stored by pumping water uphill from a lower elevation reservoir to store in an upper water basin. When energy is needed, the water is allowed

to flow through an electric turbine to generate energy, the same way it flows through a hydroelectric dam. This method is largely dependent on surrounding geography and any potential resulting ecosystem issues.

Battery technology is also gaining a lot of ground. In 2018, the power capacity from battery storage systems more than doubled from 2010. The most common type of battery chemistry is lithium-ion because of a high-cycle efficiency and fast response time. Some less-common battery types for utility storage include lead acid batteries, nickel-based batteries and sodium-based batteries. However, each chemistry has varying limitations. Beyond pumped hydropower and batteries, there are a few other forms of energy storage used at the utility scale: thermal, hydrogen and compressed air.

Energy storage currently plays a crucial role in incorporating renewable energy into our electric grid. Solar and wind energy are weather-dependent, so when energy demand is low but energy supply is high from the sun or wind, storing the excess energy makes it possible to use it later when demand is higher. As renewable energy becomes more prevalent, energy storage will help to create a more resilient grid.

Although battery prices have been decreasing steadily over the last several years, energy storage can be expensive to attain. Currently, there are 25 gigawatts of electrical energy storage capacity in the U.S., and many experts expect capacity to grow.



Energy storage plays a crucial role in incorporating renewable energy into our electric grid. Photo by Dennis Gainer

Global Energy Demand in 2020



Russell Hohn

rhohn@oaheelectric.com

No matter the energy generation source, your cooperative will provide you electricity at the lowest cost possible.

COVID-19 caused lockdown measures that have drastically changed electricity demand. Residential demand saw an uptick because millions of people worldwide were at home. Most people are spending more time at home and undertaking more activities there. The end of March and early April saw residential demands up 40 percent in European economies compared to the same time in 2019. Daily energy consumption has taken a different shape. Before COVID-19, Sunday had the highest energy use. Now weekdays mirror the same usage.

However, commercial and industrial businesses saw just the opposite. Every month of full lockdown reduced demand by 20 percent. Retail, office, hospitality, and tourism were mostly shutdown in many economies. In Italy, the hardest hit country in Europe, demand declines reached 75 percent when compared to the same time in 2019.

Renewables have claimed a greater share of generation as a result of COVID-19. Renewable energy generation is largely unaffected by electricity demand. Large renewable projects being built in 2018-2019 are now operable adding to their percentage in the energy portfolio. The share of wind and solar is nearing 30 percent up from 26 percent in 2019.

Nuclear generation fell by three percent in response to lower demands and because fewer reactors were operational in some regions. Gas fired generation increased by four percent being driven by low prices for natural gas in various markets around the world. Coal fired generation fell by eight percent in 2020 compared to 2019. A slow recovery in the world economy would put further downward pressure on coal, gas and nuclear power. Thus, leading to an even greater shift in renewable energy sources if their output is fully integrated. A faster recovery would boost energy demand, requiring all generation sources to step up. Coal and gas are predicted to lag but only by half as much. Renewables, particularly solar, is expected to see the most growth since solar projects can be constructed quickly. Nuclear power should nearly match 2019 output.

How does this effect members of Oahe Electric Cooperative? No matter the energy generation source, your cooperative will provide you electricity at the lowest cost possible. We will continue to bring you the latest in technology and provide education for your concerns. I want to personally thank each of our members for your patronage and support. God Bless and Stay Safe!

Energy Assistance Available to Those Who Qualify

The Low-Income Energy Assistance Program (LIEAP) helps eligible South Dakotans pay for home heating costs. Energy assistance may not pay for all your home heating costs but it will help ease the strain of the heating season. Energy assistance is applied to energy usage from Oct. 1 to May 15.

Eligibility for the program is based on:

- The number of people in the household
- The gross income of everyone in the household
- The type of heating for the home
- Geographic area you live in

Applications can be obtained by calling toll free 1-800-233-8503, online at www.dss.sd.gov/energyassistance, or at the local Department of Social Services office.

Pole-Top and Bucket Rescue



Matt Eldridge

meldridge@oaheelectric.com

Every month, Oahe Electric hosts a safety meeting for its employees. These safety meetings cover a large number of topics, including CPR and First Aid training, office safety, flagger training, blood borne pathogens, pole-top and bucket rescue, just to name a few! It is important for us to have these safety meetings to remind and train employees on how to do their job safely.

Recently, Oahe Electric linemen participated in pole-top and bucket rescue training. The exercise is meant to train linemen on how to safely lower an injured co-worker from the top of a pole to the ground. Oahe Electric linemen perform pole-top and bucket rescue drills once a year.

One by one, the linemen test their skills on how quickly they can strap on their climbing gear, climb a 35-foot pole and safely rescue a 175-pound dummy. The dummy must be secured with a rope before being safely lowered to the ground where co-workers are prepared to provide emergency first aid care until emergency medical professionals arrive on scene to take over.

Bucket rescue training involves taking over the controls on the body of the truck and bringing the lineman to the ground safely.

Pole top and bucket rescue are an essential part of the safety training at Oahe Electric – safely rescuing a fellow lineman could mean the difference between life and death. Pole-top and bucket rescue training and other safety training ensure our linemen and other employees are constantly reminded of the safety aspect of their job and the importance of using equipment in the safest manner possible.



Got a Sub Meter?

Please Leave Power Turned On

Most of you remember when Oahe Electric was at your home to install the sub meter. This meter allows your heating and cooling usage to be billed at the reduced rate.

A problem that Oahe Electric encounters from year to year is that some of these meters are being shut off. This is done by shutting off a breaker in your service panel. When this happens, the meter cannot record any usage at the reduced rate. Therefore, the electric usage consumed by your heating system is being billed to you at the regular residential rate.

This causes two problems.

- Consumers call with high bill complaints.
- Oahe Electric employees have to diagnose the situation.

Oahe Electric will try to contact the homeowner via phone. If the problem cannot be fixed via phone, then we have to visit each site and check breakers, wiring and so on.

Please make certain that all of your electric breakers are turned on.

All electronic equipment has a switch or thermostat that should be used for and during maintenance. **DO NOT SHUT OFF YOUR BREAKERS** unless it's an emergency.





Life on farms and in small towns changed for the better when electric co-ops brought power to the countryside.

CO-OP HISTORY

Co-op legacy provides a road map to success

Billy Gibson

editor@sdrea.coop

On Nov. 29, 1935, a handful of local farmers huddled together in a nondescript general store near Vermillion.

They knew that six months earlier President Franklin Roosevelt had signed an executive order creating the Rural Electrification Administration (REA). They knew the purpose of this new federal entity was to provide low-interest loans so that small communities all across the nation could build the power delivery infrastructures required to bring power to the countryside. And they knew this would be their best opportunity to accomplish something for themselves that the for-profit corporate utilities were unwilling to do: energize rural America. They were all in.

While there were a few fits-and-starts along the way, what emerged out of that meeting was South Dakota's first rural electric cooperative, Clay-Union Electric Corp.

Meanwhile, this exact scenario was being replicated in other small towns and villages from coast-to-coast as the rural electrification movement gained momentum and transformed the lives of millions. From those humble beginnings, the movement has swelled to more than 900 locally-owned and locally-controlled cooperatives serving 42 million Americans in 47 states.

The improbable feat of individuals coming together, organizing, planning and building such a vast power delivery system through the most sparsely populated and inhospitable landscapes has been recognized as one of the country's crowning achievements.

America's electric cooperatives take a great deal of pride in their legacy of service, their spirit of independence, their ability to work together for a common purpose and their democratic system of control and decision-making. It's a system rooted in the



Local citizens got together in the 1930s to organize electric co-ops.

very ideals that made the country great.

So why should today's generation care about this legacy?

Dan Lindblom thinks he knows. Lindblom, along with his fellow co-op leader Verdon Lamb, recently received the South Dakota Rural Electric Association's (SDREA) Legacy of Leadership Award for 2020. He said the rich history of the cooperative movement is important because it provides a model for success that both current and future generations can use to overcome obstacles and challenges, to help navigate through difficult and seemingly intractable situations.

Having served 27 years on the board at Black Hills Electric Cooperative in Custer and 23 years on the SDREA board, Lindblom certainly knows about how to approach difficult dilemmas. As a statewide board officer, Lindblom found himself in the middle of many imbroglios and political squabbles over the decades.

Whether the battleground was in Pierre or Washington, Lindblom fought to protect the interests of electric cooperative



Co-ops led the way in energizing rural America and today lead the way in developing new technologies such as electric vehicles.

members through a wide range of issues such as service territory disputes, state and federal environmental regulations, taxation, transportation and more.

In the process, he learned the art of compromise and the virtue of demonstrating mutual respect. He recalls the not-too-distant past when political



Co-ops improved the lives of all citizens in their communities.

opponents maintained personal, respectful relationships despite any ideological or policy differences they may have had. He also learned the meaning of the old axiom, “United we stand, divided we fall.”

“Speaking with one voice pays off, especially in the political arena,” Lindblom said. “We had situations where an issue may impact one or two co-ops, but we all had to stand together to provide the strength we needed to win. It’s a difficult decision to engage in a fight when you think you don’t have a dog in the hunt, but it’s necessary if you’re going to do what’s good for co-op members across the state. The next time, it may be your issue that comes up and you’ll need the support.”

Lindblom said the secret sauce of success is adopting a posture of give-and-take while standing in solidarity behind a set of shared values.

Verdon Lamb, the other 2020 Legacy of Leadership recipient, served 40 years on the board at Codington-Clark Electric Cooperative in Watertown and also served on the SDREA board. He said the history of the electric co-op movement is a prime example of what can be accomplished when people work together.

“It’s about leadership, sacrifice and working in harmony to do something that’s worth doing for other people,” Lamb said. “I always felt it was worth the sacrifice of giving up my personal time and my farming time to represent the members who put their faith in me and elected me to serve on the board.”

While some say the sense of community, sacrifice and selflessness are lost on the current generation, Lamb said he has hope that young adults will come to understand those ideals exemplified by electric co-ops.

“You know, people said the same things about us when we were kids,” said Lamb, who graduated from high school in 1953. “They said we weren’t going to amount to much, but we turned out okay.”

Chris Larson is manager at Clay-Union Electric Corp., where South Dakota’s electric cooperative system began. He pointed out that the legacy of electric cooperatives is rooted in friends, family and the community. Because cooperatives have always been owned, operated and controlled independently, and have always been geared for local service, they demonstrate the power of human connections and the strength that comes with

teamwork. He said this is especially clear to see as cooperatives and their members deal with the coronavirus pandemic.

“When times get tough, you look to your family and friends, and those are the people who make up our cooperative,” Larson said. “Cooperative communities work together to accomplish things that would be impossible to do alone. That’s what the cooperative legacy is all about, and we see how it lifts us up and sustains us through troubling times.”

Larson said electric co-op history points back to a time in the 1930s when the country was racked by a slumping economy. Co-op organizers went door-to-door to rally support and ask for a membership fee. It was money that many households simply didn’t have. He noted that the first attempt at forming the co-op failed because the start-up funds weren’t there. But by working together and staying focused on the goal, the community accomplished the mission of energizing homes, farms, schools and businesses.

“Friends and families in the Clay County area pulled together and found a way to improve the quality of life for all,” Larson said. “The result is that today we provide power to water districts, banks, grocery stores, elevators, hotels, ag supply stores and more. Electricity is the life blood that makes our local economy run. That’s why our history is so important – it shows the possibilities of what can be done. It’s a road map for achieving what some think is impossible. That’s a message we can all learn from and has no expiration date.”

Larson said that by being attentive to the legacy of electric cooperatives, members of the younger generation can make a real difference in the future of the country.

One Member; One Vote

Cooperative Democracy



David Larson

Attorney

As a cooperative, Oahe Electric operates as a representative democracy – meaning that the members of the cooperative control its governance through their election of the cooperative’s board of directors.

State law provides that in all matters put to a vote of the members, each member has and is limited to one vote.

While this concept seems simple and nearly everyone agrees with it, applying the rule can have some unexpected twists. These occur in two principal areas: (1) voting by corporations and other entities and (2) voting by husbands and wives.

Voting by corporations and other entities, including partnerships, LLCs, rural churches and cemetery associations, presents a problem because these entities of necessity must designate an individual to vote on their behalf. This creates a potential of conflicting with the one-member, one-vote rule if a single person attempts to vote more than one membership – if allowed it would have the undemocratic effect of allowing one individual to hold and vote multiple ballots. To prevent that, the one-member, one-vote rule has long been interpreted to limit each individual to one ballot only. Entities wishing to vote are required to designate as voting representative an individual who would not otherwise intend to vote.

Although there may have been some confusion about this in the past, this one-person, one-vote rule will be adhered to in the future at all cooperative elections. In part, the purpose of this article is to provide members advance notice so that any entities desiring to vote will have the opportunity to make an appropriate designation of a voting representative. A designated voting representative must be someone who will not be voting another membership.

In the case of husbands and wives, there are two rules which allow either, but not both, to vote a single membership. In cases where the husbands and wives hold a joint membership, either may cast a vote on behalf of that membership. In the case of a single membership, held by either spouse, the nonmember spouse can cast a vote of the member spouse in the absence of the member spouse. In both situations, either but not both spouses may vote. Of course, if each spouse holds an individual membership, each is entitled to vote their own membership, but not the membership of an absent spouse.

Adhering to democratic principles is one of the key elements of cooperative governance. Doing so sets them apart from nearly all other business organizations. Maintaining a voting process in keeping with these democratic principles is a vital concern to all of the members.

Authorization to Vote

Non-individual members of Oahe Electric may vote at the annual meeting by completing this form and presenting it at the registration desk. Each member organization should designate a representative and be signed by an officer or member of the governing body.

Organization (Corporation, Business, School, Church, etc.)

Address

I, _____ attest that the above organization is a member of the Cooperative and has authorized me as their voting delegate to represent them on all matters of Oahe Electric Cooperative, Inc. at its 69th annual meeting of members on October 3, 2020.

Signed: _____ Title: _____

Oct. 5, 2019

Minutes of the Sixty-Eighth Annual Meeting of the Membership of Oahe Electric Cooperative, Inc.

The sixty-eighth annual meeting of the members of the Oahe Electric Cooperative, Inc. (hereinafter called the Cooperative) was held in the Sully Buttes Auditorium in Onida, Sully County South Dakota on the 5th day of October, 2019, pursuant to provisions of the bylaws and upon notice having been given by the secretary to all of the members of the Cooperative.

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by President Ken Gillaspie, who presided.

President Gillaspie declared a quorum with 303 members present.

The Invocation was given by Pastor John Fette.

President Gillaspie delivered the Welcome Address.

On behalf of the Cooperative, Vice President Feller gave years of service awards to the following individuals: Russ Hohn, Member Services Manager, 30 years; and Sam Irvine, Offices Services Support Staff, 10 years.

Secretary Ross Sperry presented the Proof of Mailing and the Count of Membership (2,026) on the date of the annual meeting.

President Gillaspie called for approval, without reading, of the minutes of the annual meeting of

October 6, 2018. These minutes were printed in the annual meeting programs. A motion was duly made and seconded that

the reading of the minutes of October 6, 2018, be waived and that the minutes be approved. Motion carried.

Attorney Jessica Hegge then conducted the director election procedure. Since there was only one petition filed for the open position, upon a motion of affirmation duly made and seconded, James Feller was declared the successful candidate.

In a video presentation, Office Manager, Valerie Marso stated that the cooperative is in good financial condition at this time. Operations Manager, Matthew Eldridge reported on projects the line crew have been working on. Member Services Manager Russ Hohn reported on load management.

General Manager Rodney Haag gave a short welcome and then introduced guest speaker Mike Jaspers, Business Development Director of East River Electric Power Cooperative.

Jaspers gave a speech explaining East River Electric's history and the REED program.

President Gillaspie called for unfinished business; there was none.

President Gillaspie called for new business; there was none.

There being no further business to come before the meeting, upon a motion duly made, seconded and carried, the meeting was adjourned.

Official Notice Annual Meeting of the Members of Oahe Electric Cooperative, Inc.

The annual meeting of the members of Oahe Electric Cooperative, Inc. will be held at the Sully Buttes High School in Onida, SD from 4 p.m. to 6 p.m. on October 3, 2020, to take action on the following matters:

- 1) Review of the minutes of the previous meeting.
- 2) Presentation and consideration of reports, officers, directors and committees.
- 3) Election of directors.

In conjunction with the election of directors, for a term of three years each, the following members have been nominated for director by petition, pursuant to the bylaws:

For term of three years:

Ken Gillaspie, Pierre, S.D.
Ryan Noyes, Pierre, S.D.
Kirk Yackley, Pierre, S.D.

- 4) All other business that may properly come before the meeting.

Note: Please make sure to call ahead to verify the event is still being held.

September 24-26

Custer State Park Buffalo Roundup and Arts Festival, Custer, SD, 605-255-4515

September 25-27

Coal Springs Threshing Bee Featuring Massey Harris Tractors, Meadow, SD 605-788-2229

September 26

Great Downtown Pumpkin Festival, 526 Main Street, Rapid City, SD, 605-716-7979

September 26

Chamberlain/Oacoma Harvest Festival, Chamberlain, SD, 605-234-4416

September 26-27

Menno Pioneer Power Show, 616 N Fifth Street, Menno, SD

September 26

Wheelin' to Wall, Wall Community Center, Wall, SD

October 2-3

First United Methodist Church Rummage Sale, 629 Kansas City St, Rapid City, SD, 605-348-4294

October 2-3

Oktoberfest, Deadwood, SD, 605-578-1876

October 2-4, 8-10

Two on the Aisle, Three in a Van, Comedy, Grand Opera House, Pierre, SD, 605-224-7826

October 3

Cruiser Car Show & Street Fair, Main Street, Rapid City, SD, 605-716-7979



Sept. 26
Wheelin' to Wall, Wall, SD,

October 3

Cowboys, Cowgirls and Cowcatchers Soiree, 6 p.m., South Dakota State Railroad Museum, Hill City, SD, 605-574-9000

October 3-4

Marshall Area Gun Show, Red Baron Arena, 1651 Victory Dr., Marshall, MN, 507-401-6227

October 3-4

Harvest Festival, Harrisburg, SD, 605-743-2424

October 3-18

Pumpkin Festival, Canton, SD, 605-987-5171

October 10

Annual Fall Festival, 4-6 p.m., Fairburn United Methodist Church, Fairburn, SD 605-255-4329

October 10

Groton's 5th Annual Pumpkin Fest, Groton City Park, Groton, SD, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Lunch Served 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.

October 10-11

Pumpkin Festival, 27249 SD Hwy 115, Harrisburg, SD, 605-743-2424

October 24

Ladies Day Shopping Extravaganza, The Crossing Bar, Mina, SD, 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.

October 29-30

Helping with Horsepower's Phobia - A Haunted Trail, Reclamation Ranch, 40789 259th St., Mitchell, SD, 7-11 p.m. 605-770-2867

October 31-November 1

Dakota Territory Gun Collectors Assn. Sioux Falls Classic Gun Show, 3200 W Maple St. Sioux Falls, SD, 605-630-2199

November 7

Silver Star Bazaar, Lake Norden Community Center, Lake Norden, SD, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

November 7

Helping with Horsepower's RibFest, 4 p.m., Reclamation Ranch, Mitchell, SD, Contact mattcarter1421@gmail.com to Register Your Team

To have your event listed on this page, send complete information, including date, event, place and contact to your local electric cooperative. Include your name, address and daytime telephone number. Information must be submitted at least eight weeks prior to your event. Please call ahead to confirm date, time and location of event.